



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

RURAL DEVELOPMENT
WWW.RURDEV.USDA.GOV

451 West Street, Suite 2
Amherst MA 01002-2999
Voice (413) 2534300
Fax (413) 2534347
TDD (413) 2534590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 1, 2003

CONTACT: *Maril E. Alsup*
Public Information Coordinator
(413) 253-4314 or maril.alsup@ma.usda.gov

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR HEALEY & CONGRESSMAN NEAL BRING FEDERAL AID TO STURBRIDGE

STURBRIDGE, MA – Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey joined Congressman Richard E. Neal, USDA Rural Development State Director David Tuttle, State Senator Stephen Brewer and Representative Reed Hillman today to present Town Administrator, James Malloy with a check for \$1,880,800 in federal loan and grant funds. The \$1,034,440 low interest loan and \$846,360 grant will be used by the town to complete construction on the new sanitary sewer system around Big Alum Pond. The event was held at the home of Sturbridge residents Paul and Kathy Lamarine whose home was connected to the new sewer system two days ago.

This second and final phase of USDA funding comes on the heels of a previous round of funding from the agency which awarded the town \$1,962,000 in February of this year and was used to finance the first stage of construction. The new sewer system will replace Sturbridge's old on-site wastewater systems which were consistently troublesome for the residents around Big Alum Pond. Problems with the old sewer system arose when many of the traditionally seasonal homes began being converted to full time residences. As a result of the increased, year-round population, on-site systems became ineffective and unable to carry the load.

"I am gratified that we were able to collaborate with the USDA to make this project a reality for the people of Sturbridge," said Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey. "Strong communities rely upon sound infrastructure, and that is what we are bringing to the neighbors of Big Alum Pond."

USDA funding of the sewer construction will appreciably reduce the financial burden of the project to its end users – the taxpayers. "The ability to secure two phases of funding for this project in one year speaks to the hard work and commitment of the legislators that are here today," said Rural Development State Director, David Tuttle. "It is because of the towns' dedication, Governor Romney and Lieutenant Governor Healey's personal advocacy on behalf of Massachusetts' rural residents, and Congressman Neal's continued, steadfast support of Rural Development and its programs that this project will be completed so quickly."

-MORE-

“The completion of a new sewer system around Big Alum Pond will greatly improve the quality of life for many Sturbridge residents,” said Congressman Richard E. Neal. “The second and final installment of federal assistance announced today brings us one step closer to that goal.”

The objective of the USDA Rural Development Water and Wastewater Disposal Program is to develop public water and waste water systems that reduce or eliminate pollution of water resources and for the improvement and planning of solid waste facilities.

“Big Alum Pond is one of the cleanest lakes in Massachusetts and with the pressures of development around the lake, the long term water quality has been threatened,” said Town Administrator, Jim Malloy. “The cost of installing public sewers to protect the lake would have resulted in expenses to the individual property owners estimated in the \$17,000 per home range. Through the USDA’s Rural Development grant and loan program, the cost per home will be reduced to the \$9,000 range. This grant and loan program has ensured that the Town is able to take action to protect the natural resources of Big Alum Pond while not adversely affecting the residents that live in the project area.”

“I am delighted with the level of commitment the USDA and the Town of Sturbridge have demonstrated during this past year to the residents of Big Alum Pond,” said State Senator Stephen M. Brewer. “This award ensures completion of a sewer system project that is imperative to the community and will preserve the environment for the enjoyment of our future generations.”

“I am pleased to be a part of this effort which has helped to secure money to improve my hometown of Sturbridge,” said State Representative Reed Hillman. “The success of this funding for Big Alum Pond came as a result of a tremendous effort from the community, the USDA, Governor Romney and Lieutenant Governor Healey, and the state and federal legislators. This is a prime example of how cooperation and commitment from the local level all the way up to the federal government can help to make significant strides toward improving services to a community.”

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. Rural Development is Rural America's Venture Capitalist; providing equity, liquidity, and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on these and other rural programs is available at the USDA Rural Development web site: www.rurdev.usda.gov/ma.

###